

INTRO: So here we are, **the first Sunday of 2026!** – Are you looking forward to the coming year? – **Or do you feel displaced because 2025 zipped by so quickly and you're just trying to regain your focus!** – Regardless of how 2025 went, the beginning of a new year **Extends a New Invitation to ALL.** – **In my sermon**, I am NOT going to offer you **A Quick Fix**, by offering **Programs**, **a Diet** or even a **Workout**. – **Today**, I want to Encourage you with an **Eternal Perspective**, by offering you... **A CLEAR FIX FOR 2026.**

I. FIX YOUR EYES – If you don't already know it, **we are living in the LAST DAYS!** – The world is moving at a much faster pace. – This is all the more reason to be **"...Looking unto Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith..."** (Heb 12:2a) – **Jesus is the Clear Fix for 2026!** (End of Sermon, ha!)

A. Looking Back, 2025 was marked by escalating global conflicts, significant political shifts in the US, major climate-related disasters, and technology breakthroughs. – The year saw several acts of political violence, including the assassination of Charlie Kirk. – **The Wars in Gaza and Ukraine** continued with high civilian casualties. – And even the Religious Realm, we have witnessed shocking developments...

1. On the Rise is a Renewed Hatred for the Nation of ISRAEL. – Even within the church, many Christians have embraced Replacement Theology, which claims that the Church is **NOW Israel**, which is absolutely heretical. – These claim that the **Abrahamic Covenant** of (Gen 12:3), **does NOT apply to Modern Day Israel**, because Jacob (*Israel*) was not born yet; **"And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."**

- Such an argument is **Eradicated** by the prophetic words of (Num 24:9), which references **Judah**, who came from Abraham's loins (*through Jacob*), stating the same words; **'He [Judah] bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?'** **"Blessed is he who blesses you, And cursed is he who curses you."** – (*Sen. Ted Cruz and Tucker Carlson recently had a disagreement on this issue*)
- The Church must embrace an ethic of corporate responsibility as cautioned by Paul in Romans, which clearly states that God is NOT done with Israel (tt. Rom 11:25-29). – If God's gift's and callings **WERE revocable**, then what does this communicate about our security in Christ!
- It's true that the majority of modern-day Israel does not currently believe in Messiah, but the Church is to embody hope and prayer for the eschatological reconciliation of Israel, and it's PEACE (Psalm 122; 125:5; 128:6). – Let God deal with Israel according to His sovereign will!

2. Also on the Rise is the Global Presence of ISLAM. – Even in the U.S., it continues to grow, driven by immigration and high birth rates, with Muslims becoming increasingly civically engaged, particularly in voter registration. – **Islam is consistently cited as the fastest-growing major religion in the U.S.** (*Projections indicate the American Muslim population will more than double by 2050*, growing from 3.45 million in 2017 to over 8 million). – God will use this development for his purposes!

P/A – The things that were have SEEN in 2025 are Deeply Concerning, things which cause our hearts to Groan. – But take heart church, because **Jesus made clear that such events are just the beginning!** – (**Mark 13:7-9**) **But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. 8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows.**

With all this stated, I want to encourage you to be...

B. Looking Ahead in 2026! – Every True Christian must NOW FOCUS more than ever! – We do not know what will take place this year, but we KNOW HIM who does: (Isa 46:9-10) *Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'* – Come what may, *His counsel will stand!* Globally, Nationally, and even Individually...

1. Some of us may be Called to Greater Difficulty or Hardship in 2026 – Our finances or our health may falter, causing us to lose our spiritual focus. – All the more, this is when we must **FIX OUR EYES** on **the Unseen and the Eternal**, rather than the Temporary visible things of this present world.

2. Seeking an Eternal Perspective allows us to view our circumstances with spiritual eyes. – *our light affliction, which is but for a moment... is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.* (tt. 2 Cor 4:17-18)

- An **ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE OUTWEIGHS** the temporary troubles because it focuses on the **Glory that shall be revealed in us!** (cf. 2 Cor 5:7) – *On the contrary...*
- **Doubt and Despair is the WRONG PERSPECTIVE!** – Listen to this short illustration from an unknown author: *Two men looked out from prison bars... one saw Mud, and one saw Stars!*

3. Spiritual Awareness needs to be Developed in 2026. – Be OPEN to the Holy Spirit's leading to **see beyond the physical**. – Much like **Elisha's Servant** (2 Kings 6), **whose eyes were opened** so he could **see the angels surrounding and protecting them**. – It was Elisha's prayer that made it possible

- This year **We need to ask God to Open Our Eyes to what's at stake** – to the unseen world and the reality of Heaven, which is our eternal destination.

P/A – What is Your Current Perspective? – Is it focused on **things of this world** or is it focused on **JESUS?** – He alone is the Author and Finisher of our faith! Let Him direct you (*Submarine*)

II. FIX YOUR MINDS – *Let's face the facts...* we live in a time where **OUR MINDS** are constantly **bombarded** with **information and images of this world**, which can often **draw us away** from the spiritual peace we all seek. – A follower of Christ must make a **Constant Effort** to keep an **ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE** by **choosing to focus on** spiritual, everlasting realities rather than temporary, physical circumstances. – So as NOT to be distracted, *the believer must learn to FOCUS OUR MINDS ON...*

A. Heavenly Things (Col 3:1-4) – This MINDSET reminds believers to **view daily challenges and joys through the Lens of God's Greater Plan.** – *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. [WHY...] 3 for you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.* “Set your Mind” is a {P.I.A.}, denoting **constant action**.

B. Honorable Things (Phil 4:8) – A clear verse for “Fixing Your Thoughts” is found in (Phil 4:8), which encourages believers to **focus their minds on things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy, leading to the PEACE of God.** (Don't meditate on negative things!)

- **Peace** comes from a **mind which is stayed on Him!** (Isa 26:3)
- On the contrary, if we Fail to maintain a Kingdom Mindset in 2026, **then worldly cares will creep into our minds, causing us to worry** (tt. Matt 6:31-34). (Remember... this world is temporary!)

C. Healthy Things (Rom 12:2) – To do this, we must Anchor Our Thoughts and Decisions on God's Word, so as to Renew Our Minds and gain His insights to maintain a biblical worldview.

- Listen to J.B. Phillips translation of (Rom 12:2): *Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God re-mold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the Plan of God for you is good, meets all His demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.* – J.B. Phillips – FYI, “Backsliding begins with a dusty Bible” – C.H. Spurgeon

P/A – A Clear Fix for 2026 is to View Life through the Prism of God's greater plan. i.e., Knowing where we are Going, Meditating on Good things, and Renewing our Minds daily. – **Having an Eternal Perspective** will change our **Actions** and it will also change our **Attitudes**. – Living with **eternity in mind** will infuse us with a **joy and purpose** that can sustain us in daily life, even as we face hard things.

Our final point addresses the need to ...

III. FIX YOUR HEARTS – Within scripture, **the HEART signifies the seat of the affections**, including thoughts, emotions, and decisions... it is the center of a man's being. – However, **by nature, the human heart is evil** (Gen 6:5; 8:21); it is also *deceitful and wicked* (Jer 17:9). – *But God...*

A. God Desires Our Hearts! – He seeks to **Exchange** and **Empower** our Hearts, as He did with Israel, *I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them* (Ezk 26:25-27).

B. Jesus Instructs Our Hearts – He warns of **Misplaced Passions** (tt. Matt 6:19–21), *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth,... 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”*. – In our modern day, **it is easy for our hearts to be moved in different directions**. – What is **YOUR HEART FIXED ON TODAY?**

C. Two Applications for a Fixed Heart: 1) If you are in a right relationship with God, then **“keep your Heart Fixed”** on Him in 2026. – 2) If you don't have a relationship with God, then you need to **“Surrender Your Heart first, so that He can FIX IT”** – (Psalm 119:9-10) *How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!*

P/A – How then do we STAY FIXED in 2026... It starts with **1. Loving God with all Your Heart!**

2. Trust the Lord with All Your Heart, rather than relying on your own understanding (Prov 3:5-6).

3. God will Heal your Heart (Psalm 147:3), If you still have issues in your heart, bring them to God in prayer. – Acknowledge your emotional wounds (*grief, fear, anger, etc.*) – *He promises to heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds.*

4. Guard Your Heart: **Be intentional about what you consume**—the media you engage with, the words you hear, and the relationships you keep—as these influence your life's direction (Prov 4:23), *Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.*

5. Have a Forgiving Heart: **Clean out bitterness and unforgiveness** to ensure your heart overflows with peace and not contamination: (Eph 4:32), *And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

6. Prepare Your Heart by Being Rooted in Scripture: Hide God's Word in your Heart to gain direction, strength, and a solid focus for 2026. – (Psalm 119:11) **Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.**

7. Pray Often so that we Don't Lose Heart (Luke 18:1) – Prayer Helps to Guard our Hearts (Phil 4:6-7)

8. Remain in Heartfelt Community (Col 3:12-16) – **Stay** connected with believers who encourage closeness to Jesus.

9. Serve the Lord with ALL Your Heart (Col 3:23-24) – *And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.*

THIS IS A CLEAR FIX FOR 2026! – Fix your Eyes, Fix your Minds, and Fix your Hearts on Eternal Things. – Always “*...Looking unto Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith...*”

P/A – **May your 2026 be a year of** clarity over confusion, devotion over distraction, and wisdom over impulse. – **I believe this is a year for believers to** Step into greater spiritual authority, Speak God's word boldly, Confront challenges, and **Actively participate in** expanding His kingdom on Earth.

CLOSING PRAYER: *Father, you tell us NOT to fix our eyes on popular culture, NOT on fleeting accomplishments and wealth, but upon what is eternal, what will still matter a billion years from now. Give us the eyes of faith, and remind us to focus on you, our soon-returning Savior, and on eternity with you that awaits us.*

COMMUNION